

" A career is the sum total of all the work--
paid or unpaid--
you have done and will do in a lifetime."

Anonymous

Planning Your Career and Don't Know Where to Start?

There are many sources of information just waiting for you. Whether you are looking for information on career planning, counseling, training, education, or financial aid, there are resources available. Here is a list to get you started.

Personal Contacts.

The people closest to you--family and friends--can be extremely helpful in providing career information. While in high school you make friends with many people, whether as a member of a sports team or the honor society or a particular class. Talk to your family and your friends. They can provide a wealth of information. This kind of personal connection is called *networking*. These people may be able to answer your questions directly or they may be able to put you in touch with someone else who can. Networking can be an effective way to learn the type of training necessary for a certain position. You could also find out how someone in a particular position entered the field, what the prospects for advancement are, and what the person

likes or dislikes about the work.

Public Libraries, career centers, and guidance offices.

These institutions maintain a great deal of up-to-date material. To begin your library search, look at the computer listings under "vocations" or "careers" and then under more specific fields. Check the periodicals section, where trade and professional magazines and journals about specific occupations and industries are located. Check your school's career centers for resources such as:

- individual counseling and testing;
- guest speakers, field trips, books;
- career magazines; and
- career days.

Counselors. These professionals are trained to help you

discover your strengths and weaknesses, evaluate your goals and values, and help you determine what you would like in a career. Counselors will not tell you what to do. They may, however, administer interest inventories and aptitude tests, interpret the results, and help you explore various options. Counselors also may discuss local job markets and the entry requirements and costs of schools, colleges, or training programs.

Internet. Most companies, professional societies, academic institutions, and government agencies now maintain a web site. Occupational and industry data, career counseling, and financial aid information are just a small sampling of what's available. "The world awaits

you" when you log on to the world wide web.

Professional societies, trade associations, labor unions, business firms, and educational institutions. These organizations provide a variety of free or inexpensive career material. Many of these are listed in an additional information section in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2002-2003 (OOH)*, developed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The complete OOH is available on-line at

[http://
www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/)>.

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